AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims in accordance with the changes indicated in the complete listing of claims that follows, which shall replace all prior versions of the claims in the application.

1. (**Currently Amended**) A void former, comprising:

an elongate tubular body having a closed inner end and an open outer end;

a wall of said body defined by coextensive inner and outer surfaces; ~~and~~

a groove formed in said wall and extending from one of said inner and outer surfaces thereof toward, but not through the other of said inner and outer surfaces, such that a web of material substantially thinner than said wall is retained between said groove and the other of said inner and outer surfaces; and

a flange circumscribing a portion of the periphery of said elongate tubular body at said open outer end and extending radially outwardly therefrom so as to facilitate grasping of the flange prior to removal from a concrete void;

said ~~groove~~ web being configured to both rupture and permit said body to collapse inwardly in response to a grasping force applied to said ~~body at said open end thereof~~ flange and directed longitudinally away from said elongate tubular body.

2. (**Currently Amended**) The void former of claim [[19]] --1--, further comprising:

a slot formed in said flange and having side edges positioned on opposite sides of said groove, wherein said groove extends along said body and terminates ~~at said flange~~ within the slot.

3. **(Cancelled)**

4. **(Previously Presented)** The void former of claim 1, wherein said groove extends spirally along and about said body.

5. **(Original)** The void former of claim 4, wherein said groove is formed in said inner surface of said body.

6. **(Original)** The void former of claim 5, wherein said outer surface of said body is substantially smooth.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The void former of claim 1, further comprising:

a mass of ~~hardened~~ plastic concrete having an outer surface;

said body being positioned in said mass with said open end positioned adjacent said outer surface of said mass and said flange positioned in contact with said outer surface.

8. **(Original)** The void former of claim 7, wherein:

said mass has an upper surface substantially normal to said outer surface thereof, and

said elongate tubular body extends substantially parallel to said upper surface.

9. **(Cancelled)**

10. (**Currently Amended**) In combination with a mass of plastic concrete having an upper surface and an edge surface extending substantially perpendicularly to said upper surface, the improvement comprising:

an elongate tubular body having a closed inner end and an open outer end, said body being received in said mass with said outer end positioned at said edge surface of said mass and said body extending substantially parallel to said upper surface of said mass;

a wall of said body defined by coextensive inner and outer surfaces;

a groove formed in said wall and extending from one of said inner and outer surfaces to--,-- but not through--,-- the other of said inner and outer surfaces such that a web of material substantially thinner than said wall bridges said groove; and

a flange generally circumscribing the periphery of said elongate tubular body at said open outer end and projecting perpendicularly outwardly therefrom, said flange being in overlapping contact with said edge surface of said mass;

said ~~groove~~ web being configured to both rupture and permit said body to collapse inwardly in response to a grasping force applied to said ~~body at said open end thereof~~ flange and directed longitudinally away from said elongate tubular body.

11. (**Original**) The combination of claim 10, wherein said groove extends spirally along and about said body.

12. (**Cancelled**)

13. (**Withdrawn – Previously Presented**) A method of forming a void in a mass of hardened concrete having a substantially horizontal upper surface and an edge surface extending substantially perpendicular to the upper surface, the method comprising:

obtaining a void former, the void former comprising

an elongate tubular body having a closed inner end and an open outer end;

a wall of said body defined by coextensive inner and outer surfaces; and

a groove formed in said wall and extending from one of said inner and outer surfaces thereof toward, but not through the other of said inner and outer surfaces;

positioning the body in a mass of concrete with the open outer end of the body adjacent the edge surface of the mass of concrete;

allowing said mass of concrete to harden; and

applying a force to said body adjacent said open end effective to rupture said groove and inwardly collapse said body, wherein said void former contracts to a size permitting withdrawal from the hardened mass.

14. (**Cancelled**)

15. (**Withdrawn - Original**) The method of claim 13, wherein positioning the body comprises inserting the body into the concrete while it is in a plastic state.

16. (**Withdrawn - Original**) The method of claim 13, wherein positioning the body comprises pouring concrete over and around the body.

17. (**Withdrawn – Previously Presented**) The method of claim 13, wherein the groove extends spirally around and about the body.

18. (**Withdrawn - Original**) The method of claim 17, wherein the body is provided with an outwardly extending flange positioned at the outer end of the body and collapsing the body comprises applying a tensile force to the flange.

19. (**Cancelled**)

20. (**Previously Presented**) The void former of claim 1, wherein said closed inner end is tapered to facilitate insertion into plastic concrete.

21. (**Previously Presented**) The combination of claim 10, wherein said closed inner end is tapered to facilitate insertion into plastic concrete.

22. (**Withdrawn – Previously Presented**) The method of claim 17, wherein the body is provided with an outwardly extending flange positioned at the outer end of the body and collapsing the body comprises applying a torsional force to the flange.

23. (**Withdrawn – Previously Presented**) The method of claim 16, wherein the body is provided with an outwardly extending flange positioned at the outer end of the body and wherein positioning the body further comprises fastening the flange of the void former to a concrete form.

24. (**New**) The combination of claim 10, further comprising:

a slot formed in said flange and having side edges positioned on opposite sides of said groove, wherein said groove extends along said body and terminates within the slot.

25. (**New**) The combination of claim 21, wherein said elongate tubular body is formed without a taper along a substantial majority of its length so as to form a substantially cylindrical void in said mass.